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Security Council

Sixty-ninth year

Provisional

7095th meeting

Thursday, 16 January 2014, 10 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Hmoud	(Jordan)
Members:	Argentina	Mrs. Perceval
	Australia	Mr. Quinlan
	Chad	Mr. Cherif
	Chile	Mr. Errázuriz
	China	Mr. Liu Jieyi
	France	Mr. Araud
	Lithuania	Ms. Murmokaitė
	Luxembourg	Ms. Lucas
	Nigeria	Mrs. Ogwu
	Republic of Korea	Mr. Oh Joon
	Russian Federation	Mr. Churkin
	Rwanda	Mr. Nduhungirehe
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Wilson
	United States of America	Mr. DeLaurentis

Agenda

The situation in Mali

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Mali (S/2014/1)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Mali

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Mali (S/2014/1)

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representatives of Côte d'Ivoire and Mali to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Albert Koenders, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2014/1, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Mali.

I now give the floor to Mr. Koenders.

Mr. Koenders (*spoke in French*): It is a great pleasure and an honour for me to address the Security Council today. The third report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Mali, which is before the Council (S/2014/1), follows up on resolution 2100 (2013), of 25 April 2013, which established the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA). Today, I wish to give members an overview of the political and security situation in Mali, the progress made since my briefing last October (see S/PV.7043) and the challenges that lie ahead.

At the outset, allow me to convey to you, Mr. President, and to members of the Council my best wishes for the new year. I also take this opportunity to welcome the new members of the Security Council and to wish them every success in their deliberations.

The year that has just ended was decisive for the Malian people. Despite the challenges, they demonstrated their will and determination to move forward after the serious and multifaceted crisis that the country experienced in 2012. In that way, it was possible to organize free and transparent presidential and legislative elections throughout the country, enabling Mali to reaffirm its territorial integrity and a return to constitutional order. The country's President, His Excellency Mr. Boubacar Keita, clearly set out the priorities for the stabilization and economic rebuilding of the country. In that regard, he gave priority to national reconciliation, the fight against impunity and corruption, security sector reform and the strengthening of institutional capacities and development, in particular in the northern regions.

In the coming months, therefore, Mali will have to take advantate of this unique opportunity, with the support of the international community, in order to tackle the complex root causes of the multiple crises that the country has experienced. It must lay down a lasting basis for peace and reconciliation and again become a stable partner for guaranteed regional security. That requires that the inclusive talks with the communities of the north and the signatories to the preliminary agreement begin without further delay; that the road map and a framework agreement that includes the United Nations and the international community be established; that the State re-establish itself and that basic services operate again across the country; and that security sector reform and the process of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration take place. All those aspects are very closely linked and require the sustained attention of the Security Council. Progress on each of those elements is necessary in order to succeed in a regional context that remains, I have to say, fragile and perilous. The time has come to make headway on that composite agenda, given that delays could jeopardize the achievements that have been realized.

With respect to the implementation of the preliminary agreement of 18 June 2013, some confidence-building measures have already been initiated to bring about reconciliation. On the one hand, the Government organized a series of inclusive consultations, such as the States-General on the decentralization and the national conferences on the north. Regional conferences were also conducted in Gao. Key steps on the reinstatement of national sovereignty were taken, in particular the exchange of prisoners and the vacating of the governorate building and the radio station in Kidal, which was accepted by the signatory parties of the preliminary agreement.

We would also welcome the progress made by the Monitoring and Evaluation Committee and the Mixed Technical Commission on Security in implementing the provisions of the preliminary agreement. However, with the elapse of the 60-day time frame before the start of inclusive talks, it is important that signatory parties to the agreement come to terms as quickly as possible on the principles, the conditions and the format of a process of inclusive talks that would allow for all the political and security aspects to be addressed, as provided for by article 21 of the preliminary agreement and paragraph 4 of resolution 2100 (2013). In the same context, the cantonment process should be sped up in order to get a genuine process of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) and security sector reform (SSR) under way.

MINUSMA is currently establishing a coordination group to support all those processes and their planning and to guarantee the consistency and coordination of the contributions of international partners in the framework of supporting the processes of cantonment, DDR and SSR in Mali. In more general terms, we would urge the Government to set up as quickly as possible a cooperation framework in line with the provisions of resolution 2100 (2013) and the preliminary agreement in order to support dialogue and negotiations. MINUSMA, together with the international community, will help the Government along those lines.

Despite the considerable efforts undertaken by Mali and MINUSMA in the areas of defence and security, which have allowed for a gradual return of the Administration and certain populations in the north, I would nevertheless underscore that the security situation remains volatile. The difficulty of the situation should not be underestimated. We firmly condemn the resurgence of terrorist attacks. We would recall that such attacks, perpetrated mainly in the Kidal region, led to several deaths and injuries among the civilian population and the Malian army. In addition, four peacekeepers and two French journalists lost their lives there. We reiterate our condolences to the bereaved families, and in particular to the Governments of Senegal and Chad, which are the troop-contributing countries concerned.

The terrorist threat has always been at the core of our concerns. An upsurge in terrorist activities confirms those concerns, which we have consistently shared with the Security Council. An effective stabilization of the northern regions requires cooperation both politically and on the security front, with the contribution of MINUSMA and the national and international partners involved.

(*spoke in English*)

MINUSMA presently counts with 5,488 military personnel out of the projected 11,200, 71 individual police officers out of the projected 320, and 883 formed police unit elements out of the projected 1,120. The security challenges and the expectations of the population are enormous. It is therefore essential that the international community continue to back without delay efforts to accelerate the generation and deployment of the remaining MINUSMA units in the north of the country. The Security Council's support and that of the Member States to secure the necessary enablers and force multipliers in a timely fashion is promising and remains essential as we carry out the strong mandate the Council has entrusted us with to contribute to a secure environment for the people of Mali.

Considerable progress has been made on the humanitarian front, and we would like to commend the leadership and efforts of the Government of Mali in strengthening its capacity to support humanitarian operations. More than 145,000 children have been able to return to reopened schools in Gao and Timbuktu. Many local health-care centres in the northern regions have been rehabilitated, more than 1 million people have benefitted from access to drinking water and more than 217,000 acutely malnourished children have benefitted from life-saving care programmes provided by the Malian Government and humanitarian actors.

Yet it is important to underline that very significant and daunting challenges remain for 2014. Almost half a million people remain displaced within Mali and in neighbouring countries, and at least 800,000 people are in need of immediate food assistance. Another 2.4 million people remain moderately food insecure, and their situation is at risk of worsening during the upcoming lean season. To date, the 2013 consolidated appeal for Mali has received only 55 per cent of the amount required. I mention that because we simply must do better in 2014, as the severe situation also has a direct impact on the chances for peace in Mali.

Let us not forget that during the crisis, families in the south provided shelter to countless relatives from the north who were fleeing the conflict. While we focus our efforts on supporting the Government

in addressing immediate challenges in the north, it is important to bear in mind that the crisis has affected all Malians, including those living in the southern part of the country, and they should be supported accordingly.

As the country gradually moves towards greater institutional stability and in spite of the security challenges, the Government should quickly implement the priorities defined by President Keita. The international community stands ready to lend its support. For its part, MINUSMA will continue to carry out important work in the areas of human rights and other protection activities, including combating sexual violence. Those tasks constitute a centrepiece of the overall mandate to protect civilians that the Security Council has given us.

Meanwhile, it is imperative for the Malian authorities and the international community to fulfil the mutual commitments undertaken during the high-level donors conference for the development of Mali held in Brussels on 15 May 2013, which were reiterated in Bamako on 7 November. The follow-up donors conference planned to take place next month in Brussels will be an important milestone for Mali. We must ensure that the international community fulfils its pledges. At the same time, it is obviously not about providing a blank check. The crisis that Mali encountered in 2012 was too serious for us all to continue to do business as usual.

We need greater alignment of foreign aid with Malian priorities in the context of even stronger Malian leadership, and it should be related to the start of inclusive talks. That could be done by defining a framework of mutual accountability, mutual responsibility, enhanced transparency and collective commitment to results. People in both the south and north of the country need to feel that things are changing and see a peace dividend and visible improvements in their daily lives, such as education for their children, greater access to health care, water and electricity.

To date, MINUSMA has approved 13 quick-impact projects in Kidal, Gao and Timbuktu, for a total amount of more than half a million dollars. We have also initiated a number of projects with the Trust Fund for Peace and Security in Mali, including the electrification of Kidal and the cantonment of armed group elements. The needs are great and the resources limited. I am extremely thankful for the continuing support of the international community in that respect.

The challenges facing the Sahel region are numerous and cannot be tackled in isolation. The joint regional visit by the Secretary-General, the African Union Chairperson, the European Union Commissioner for Development and Presidents of the World Bank Group and the African Development Bank in early November was a positive step in that direction. The 5 November 2013 meeting hosted by the Government of Mali provided an opportunity to hear the concerns and priorities of the countries of the region themselves and enhance coordination, which is also necessary, among regional and international partners, including the international financial institutions.

The journey to stability is long and at times difficult. I have been in Mali now for six months and, everywhere I turn, I am reminded of the rich cultural history of its people. I can confidently say that there are no obstacles that the Malians cannot overcome. However, it requires patience and strong determination.

Mali is at a crossroads, and the international community should continue to actively support ongoing national efforts to steer the country in the right direction and avoid relapsing into the old habits that gave rise to the unprecedented crisis over a year ago. In that sense, the real work in Mali is only just starting. That work remains fraught with risks and takes place in a volatile regional setting.

I would like to thank the African Union, the Economic Community of West African States, the European Union and other international partners for their commitment to addressing the Malian situation and for their support to MINUSMA. Our common efforts can make an important difference.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I thank Mr. Koenders for his briefing.

I now give the floor to the representative of Mali.

Mr. Kassé (Mali) (*spoke in French*): Allow me, first of all, to warmly congratulate you, Mr. President, on the accession of your country, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, to the presidency of the Security Council for the month of January. At the same time, I would like to express our great appreciation for the outstanding work undertaken by the delegation of France during its presidency of the Council in December 2013. We would also like to wish every success to the new members of the Security Council.

Allow me also to wish, on behalf of the people and Government of Mali, a very happy new year to the members of the Council, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and United Nations peacekeepers deployed in different theatres of operation, who give their lives fighting for a better world — one that is free of conflict, war, terrorism, trafficking in drugs and human beings and so on.

I would also like to take this opportunity to reiterate the gratitude of the highest Malian authorities to French President François Hollande for his courageous decision to launch Operation Serval on 11 January 2013 to halt the spread of jihadist groups towards the centre and south of Mali.

This is also the time to pay a heartfelt tribute to the African forces, in particular those from Chad and Mali, who, alongside the French army, freed the largest cities of the north of my country.

On 16 October 2013, exactly three months ago, the Security Council considered the second report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Mali (S/2013/582), pursuant to the relevant provisions of resolution 2100 (2013) (see S/PV.7043)Since then, significant advances have been made on the political and security fronts and in the areas of restoring State authority, protecting human rights, developing humanitarian activities, carrying out the mandate of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) and international coordination.

At the political level, we note the conclusion of the electoral process with the holding of presidential and legislative elections, which were recognized as being transparent and credible both by all political players in Mali and by the international community, including the Security Council.

In its ongoing search for peace, the Government, under the authority of President Boubacar Keita, has undertaken a series of efforts aimed at decentralization, national reconciliation, the development of the regions of the north and good governance, with the end goal of, iter alia, promoting respect for human rights and combattng corruption and impunity. Therefore, in the context of strengthening decentralization and the power of local authorities, the Government recruited more than 10,000 teachers and 2,400 health-care workers last year to fill in human resource gaps in those two vital sectors.

As part of that initiative, the Government organized a national forum on decentralization from 21 to 23 October 2013. Those meetings were aimed at establishing institutional mechanisms to empower decentralized communities. They allowed all stakeholders to take stock of the achievements and shortcomings of our experience and to propose new ways to achieve significant progress in that area.

Along the same lines, the President instructed the Government to organize a national conference on the north to discuss, debate and exchange views on all issues of concern for the Malian nation. That conference took place from 1 to 3 November 2013, and was aimed at establishing a foundation to change attitudes and encourage behaviour essential to the emergence of a new future for the country that is reconciled with its history and its positive traditional values, forward-looking and determined to create a new society based on creative work.

With the overwhelming participation of all sectors of our nation, the national conference on the north helped to build trust between the Malian people and engage in dialogue armed groups and all the other actors in the north who have their own views with regard to their immediate environment. The recommendations made to address the concerns of affected populations will be taken into account in the implementation of development projects in the northern regions of Mali.

In that connection, the Government has drawn up and adopted with MINUSMA elements of a road map out of the crisis, based on the following guidelines: first, convening by the end of January 2014 meetings of the active forces of the northern regions on the issues related to ending the crisis; secondly, holding a meeting of the Monitoring and Evaluation Committee of the agreement of 18 June 2013; and, thirdly, initiating inclusive peace talks in the very near future. Those talks will be preceded by three preparatory meetings, namely, a workshop on cantonment, a symposium on lessons learned from preceding agreements and a seminar with technical and financial partners on the accelerated development plan for the northern regions.

The Government of Mali is strongly committed to restoring an environment conducive to the peaceful cohabitation of the people of the northern and the southern regions. In that context, a ministerial department dedicated entirely to national reconciliation and the development of the northern regions was set

up to address, among other things, the economic and human dimensions of the issues inherent to the three northern regions.

As indicated in the report of the Secretary-General (S/2014/1), the security conditions in the north deteriorated considerably from 30 September to 21 December 2013. A series of asymmetric attacks perpetrated by criminal gangs against civilian populations, the Malian armed forces and MINUSMA troops suffice to show that terrorist groups are reorganizing themselves. Faced with the threat that the progressive reduction of the Operation Serval force could exacerbate that situation, it is crucial that MINUSMA be provided with adequate resources to enable it to fulfil its mandate in line with the strategic objectives of the Government of Mali, whose centrepiece is the immediate re-establishment of the authority of the Malian State throughout its territory, including in the Kidal region.

With regard to the incidents in Kidal on 28 November 2013, when the Prime Minister and his delegation were prevented from going there by individuals from the Mouvement national pour la libération de l'Azawad, the report states that the Malian armed forces opened fire on demonstrators, injuring four of them. In response, I would like to point out, as was done by the Minister for Reconciliation and Development of the North of the Republic of Mali, bearing the message of the President to the Secretary-General on 5 December 2013, that this information does not reflect reality because the MINUSMA elements who were the closest to the scene of the incident were actually 400 metres away, which does not allow them to provide an objective testimony. Therefore, they are not able to say who opened fire on the crowd, without knowing the results of the ballistic analysis ordered by the Government.

The members of the Security Council, having reaffirmed in resolution 2100 (2013), adopted under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations, their commitment to the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Mali, should not accept today that Kidal remain a regional safe haven for terrorism, drug traffickers and kidnappers. Armed groups must lay down their weapons, not associate with terrorists and participate in the process of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and inclusive dialogue.

In terms of international coordination, my delegation agreed with what is stated in the report of the Secretary-General on the need to adopt a comprehensive and coordinated approach to meet the challenges of the Sahel. Such an approach was reaffirmed in Bamako on 5 November 2013, at the first ministerial meeting on the establishment of a coordinating platform for the United Nations integrated strategy for the Sahel. On that occasion, the ministers of the Sahel agreed to, among other things, adopt common priorities for regional initiatives in the Sahel and monitor progress, including through coordinated support from the international community. My country, which holds the rotating presidency of the coordinating platform for the next two years, is already hard at work to diligently implement the recommendations of the Bamako meeting.

On the occasion of the first anniversary of the launch of Operation Serval, I should lie to pay tribute to the memory of the brave soldiers who sacrificed their lives in the fight against terrorism and "narco-jihadism".

On behalf of President Keita, I should like to thank the United Nations, the African Union, the Economic Community of West African States, the European Union, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, the International Organization of la Francophonie and our bilateral partners. Our thanks also go to the new countries contributing troops and equipment to MINUSMA. My delegation welcomes the report of the Secretary-General before us and Mali is honoured to welcome in the coming days the Security Council mission.

I cannot conclude without asking the Security Council, on behalf of my Government, to call on Member States, perhaps through a presidential statement, to support the strengthening of MINUSMA with appropriate means and to encourage them to uphold their commitments made in Brussels in May 2013.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now give the floor to the representative of Côte d'Ivoire.

Mr. Bamba (Côte d'Ivoire) (*spoke in French*): Allow me convey to you, Sir, my delegation's warm congratulations upon your country's accession to the presidency of the Security Council for the month of January. I would also like to congratulate the other non-permanent members who will serve on the Council in 2014 and 2015. I also take this opportunity to convey to the Council members our best wishes for the new year.

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the 15 member States of the Economic Community of West

African States (ECOWAS). I would like to thank the Secretary-General to report on the situation in Mali (S/2014/1) dated 2 January, which is before the Council today.

I would also like to congratulate the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Bert Koenders, for his excellent briefing of the situation in Mali, as well as Ambassador Sékou Kassé, Permanent Representative of Mali.

Since the election of President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita and following the recent transparent and well-organized elections, we can say that normal constitutional order has been re-established in Mali fully and irreversibly. However, those gains must be strengthened and consolidated by rapid progress, in particular on the security, political, humanitarian and human rights fronts, and above all through the continued commitment of the international community to sustainable solutions in Mali.

On the security front, the situation remained relatively calm but volatile across the entire country and extremely fragile and worrying in the Kidal region, where tensions were high, as illustrated most clearly by the double murder of French journalists Ghislaine Dupont and Claude Verlon.

The situation in the north of the country is characterized by asymmetric warfare in the form of sporadic jihadist attacks against Malian armed forces and the international forces of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) and Operation Serval.

Two major facts illustrate the insecurity in northern Mali, namely the jihadist attack on 23 October 2013, at Tessalit by unidentified armed assailants against Chadian peacekeeping troops of MINUSMA, and the suicide car bomb attack on 14 December 2013, against the Malian Solidarity Bank building. Two Chadian peacekeepers and two Senegalese soldiers were killed in Tessalit and Kidal, respectively.

Against that backdrop, the Malian Government officially launched on 2 December the security sector reform and set up 11 working groups to develop a comprehensive strategy. The ECOWAS Commission, through the Special Representation in Mali, has been asked to nominate a representative to the working group, who will have an active role throughout that process.

On the political front, the developments included the holding of talks in the north and the legislative elections. With regard to the talks in the north, it must be recalled that, pursuant to the provisions of the preliminary agreement on the presidential elections and on inclusive dialogue on peace in Mali, dated 18 June 2013, the talks in the north were held on 1, 2 and 3 November 2013, in Bamako. Their aim was to set out and share the concerns and expectations of the Malian people and to seek lasting, fair and inclusive peace. Thereby, they produced a series of recommendations, whose implementation will provide for decentralization and for the harmonious development of the regions of Mali.

Furthermore, a regional reconciliation forum was held in Gao from 30 November to 2 December 2013. The forum allowed for reconciliation in the north and brought together more than 500 representatives — from the second-level administrative units of Ansongo, Bourem, Gao and Ménaka — including religious leaders, women, young people and members of civil society organizations. This forum implements the Government dialogue and reconciliation policy with the aim of easing inter-community tensions.

With regard to the legislative elections, following on from what the Malian Ambassador said, ECOWAS notes that the electoral campaigns went calmly without incident and that the first two rounds of elections were held across Mali as planned on 24 November and 15 December, including in Kidal. There was a lower turn-out for those than for the presidential elections. Out of the 147 seats, the party of President Keita and his allies won an absolute majority in the National Assembly.

ECOWAS, through its Special Representative, has provided continuous assistance to the Government of Mali in the preparation and organization of the elections. Overall, it deployed a 150 person-strong observation mission to the first and second round elections. The observers concluded that the legislative elections of 24 November and 15 December, 2013, showed significant progress in relation to the presidential elections. They were held in acceptable conditions of freedom and transparency.

On the humanitarian front, according to a report dated 27 November 2013, from the Movement of Populations Commission, which comprises several international organizations, including the International

Organization for Migration, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), the World Food Programme and UNICEF, the number of displaced persons had fallen since October 2013. Such a decrease in the number of internally displaced persons was found throughout the country, but was more concentrated in the regions of the far north. However, an increase was observed in the towns surrounding Kidal, probably due to the insecurity and uncertainty linked to the particular situation in that Kidal. With regard to refugees, returns are being stepped up and only 185,000 refugees remain in neighbouring countries.

For its part, ECOWAS is fully committed to assisting Mali through various humanitarian activities. In that context, working with OCHA last November, ECOWAS conducted predeployment training for 20 humanitarian observers, followed, on 19 December, by a disbursement of donations totalling $500,0000 to Malian authorities for the local purchase of provisions to relieve the suffering of the population.

With regard to human rights, the situation is improving progressively throughout the country thanks to the determination of the new Malian authorities, who decided to combat violations of human rights and fight impunity. In recent weeks, that was evident in the arrest and indictment of General Amadou Haya Sanogo and some of his former comrades in the so-called "red berets" case. With regard to the fight against corruption, four judges and a clerk were arrested on Tuesday, 10 December and placed in custody.

The extraordinary progress made by Mali under the leadership of President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita should be supported by the continued engagement of the international community. In that context, the sixth meeting of the international support and monitoring group on the situation in Mali was held, on 2 November 2013. The meeting gave participants an opportunity to take note of the latest positive developments in the political situation in Mali since 1 July 2013. Participants also urged the international community to continue to provide technical expertise, assistance and financial and material support to Mali so that the country could regain its place in the comity of nations. The United Nations integrated strategy for the Sahel and the ECOWAS strategy, which encompasses a holistic approach to security, the humanitarian dimension and development challenges in the region, were also presented at that meeting.

In conclusion, we should also welcome the holding in Bamako, on 5 November 2013, of the first ministerial meeting on the United Nations integrated strategy for the Sahel, which aimed at establishing a coordination platform on the Sahel. The meeting, which benefited in particular from the participation of Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, African Union Commission Chairperson Ms. Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma and the heads of international financial institutions, including the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the European Union, was an opportunity to bring together donors and to take stock ofthe funding pledges made and the priorities identified in the Sahel region and their implementation as set out in the United Nations integrated strategy for the Sahel.

It was clearly re-emphasized at that important meeting that there is an intrinsic link between peace, security and development and that there is a need to set up projects centred around the development of the Sahel in order to contain threats to peace and security, such as poverty and insecurity, in all their forms. The people of Mali and the Sahel region are anxious to see the realization of those projects.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): There are no more names inscribed on the list of speaker. I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion of the subject.

The meeting rose at 10.40 a.m.